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Appendix 1: Community Participation

Community Participation: Outreach Activities

The outreach activities for the Waterfront Small Area Plan (Plan) began in April 2009 and continue to the present. The outreach program has been multi-faceted and extensive, with a variety of activities, including tours, meetings, and charrettes that have promoted access to information and involvement in the process. Additionally, different outreach tools such as eNews and the waterfront webpage are being utilized to help citizens and other interested stakeholders keep abreast of activities and stay involved. The Plan and information generated at various activities can be downloaded from the webpage at www.alexandriava.com/Waterfront. The City is committed to continuing this level of community outreach throughout the public review process for the Plan and its implementation.

The following pages discuss the iterative community process which led to the draft Plan, beginning with: (1) Early Outreach Activities; (2) Ideas and Guiding Concepts; (3) Activity Map; (4) Goals and Objectives; (5) Concept Plan; (6) Core Area Draft Design; and (7) the Plan.

Table A1: Early Outreach Activities

Community Participation: <i>Early Outreach Activities from April 2009 to April 2010</i>	
Community Forum #1 - April 23, 2009	Presentation of schedule and an “open mike” solicitation of themes from stakeholder organizations and individuals.
Community Forum #2 – April 30, 2009	Introduction of consultants and sub-consultants; discussion of best practices and examples of waterfronts from around the world.
Boat Tour – May 30, 2009	View of the entire Alexandria Waterfront from the water with background information on the history of the Waterfront and identification of key places along the Waterfront.
Walking Tour – June 24, 2009	An hour and a half tour of the Waterfront, hosted by the Waterfront Committee, to provide information about landside features and solicit input.
Community Charrette – June 27, 2009	Morning Session – background information on existing conditions and opportunities and constraints; Afternoon Session – breakout groups that developed ideas for a vision of the Waterfront.
New York Field Trip – August 5, 2009	New York Assets: Battery Park City, Bryant Park, High Line and South Street Seaport.
Community Meeting – September 29, 2009	Presentation of Guiding Concepts from Community Charrette and Open House (hosted by the Torpedo Factory).
Work Sessions to describe Outreach and Guiding Concepts – October 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Planning Commission – October 6, 2009 ○ BAR – October 21, 2009 ○ City Council – October 27, 2009
Topical Meetings – January and March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ History Night – January 14, 2010 ○ Marina Night – January 28, 2010 ○ Arts Night – March 8, 2010
Chamber of Commerce – March 22, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alexandria Restaurant Commission Meeting – Waterfront Presentation
Community Meeting – May 3, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Concept Plan Presentation

Community Participation: *Ideas and Guiding Concepts*

From the activities noted above, a series of Ideas and Guiding Concepts from the community emerged for an Activity Map which followed.

Ideas and Guiding Concepts:

- Celebrate the **Foot of King Street**
- Improve the **Public Realm** of the Waterfront
- Enhance Access and **Connectivity**
- Strengthen **View Corridors**
- **Protect** and Beautify **Founders Park**
- **Strengthen Oronoco Bay Park** with Celebrations, Family Activities, Special Events and Concerts
- Preserve and **Celebrate History**
- **Public Art and History** as Unifying Elements
- **Enhance the Strand**
- Expand **Water-related Activities**
- **Improve Shoreline** Treatment
- Expand **Multi-Modal Access**
- Make Economically, Operationally and Environmentally **Sustainable**

Community Participation: Activity Map

The community created an Activity Map which organizes the Ideas and Guiding Concepts in geographic order along the waterfront.

Activity Map

Waterfront Plan Activity Map based on Community input-

Daingerfield Island:

Waterfront trail with interpretation and nature

Mirant Plant:

Explore long-term opportunities

Mid-Section of Map

Oronoco Park (Green):

Events, families and nature

Robinson Terminal North (Red):

Redevelopment that invites the public and transforms the pier

Founder's Park (Green):

Protect and beautify

City Marina Plaza (Red):

Waterfront hub

Foot of King (Arrow & Spiral):

Feelings of celebration, arrival and anticipation

The Strand (Red):

A destination; dining; a place to be seen

Windmill Hill Park (Green):

Realize the vision of the park plan

Jones Point Park (Green):

Work with NPS to implement park plan

Figure A1: Activities Map



Community Participation: Goals and Objectives

Based on the vision reflected in the Activity Map for the waterfront, and community input during various Early Outreach Activities, the following Goals and Objectives were developed. These Goals and Objectives shaped the Concept Plan:

1. **Authentic:** Create a unique waterfront identity that is grounded in the City's history.
 - ◆ Celebrate and honor the broad history and culture of the Alexandria Waterfront from, from prehistory to now.
 - ◆ Respect the scale and fine grain of Old Town.
 - ◆ Protect identified historic resources, archaeological resources, and cultural resources, including buildings and sites.
 - ◆ Adaptively reuse identified historic buildings.
2. **Connected:** Increase and improve access to the public spaces of the Waterfront. Pedestrian connectivity along the Waterfront should be continuous.
 - ◆ Create continuous pedestrian access along the entire Waterfront.
 - ◆ Provide continuous north-south bicycle access.
 - ◆ Enhance visual cues and sight lines for pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles on all grid streets and alleys and increase accessibility for pedestrians, bicycles and, as appropriate, vehicles.
 - ◆ Create connections to the Waterfront from Metro stations.
 - ◆ Increase the capacity for access to Alexandria by boat.
 - ◆ Encourage commuting and leisure travel by boat between Alexandria and other regional waterfront destinations.
3. **Inclusive:** The Waterfront, is and should continue to be, a citywide resource to be enjoyed by all Alexandrians. Ensure public access to the entire Waterfront.
 - ◆ Provide a variety of activities for people of all ages and cultures.
 - ◆ Link the Waterfront to Alexandria neighborhoods.
4. **Dynamic:** Maintain a living, active Waterfront that is a destination that attracts all Alexandrians and visitors and should be integral to the visitor experience in Alexandria.
 - ◆ Expand services and activities for visitors.
 - ◆ Increase the use, frequency, and effectiveness of public spaces for gatherings and events.
 - ◆ Emphasize art and history in each new initiative along the Waterfront.
 - ◆ Utilize art and history as a unifying element.
 - ◆ Strengthen the reputation of the area as a regional and national visitor destination by adding uses that complement existing retail, office and tourist attractions.
5. **Variety:** Provide a variety of uses, themes, activities, and experiences along the Waterfront.
 - ◆ Create a diverse scale of spaces along the Waterfront.
 - ◆ Offer activities and features that delight a diverse range of visitors.
 - ◆ Provide a range of shoreline treatments and types that offer diverse ways to interact with the water.
6. **Manageable:** Improve the Waterfront's vehicular and pedestrian circulation and parking.
 - ◆ Minimize pedestrian and vehicle conflicts.
 - ◆ Increase way-finding for residents and visitors.
 - ◆ Maximize underutilized parking opportunities elsewhere in Old Town.
 - ◆ Promote use of designated pick-up and drop-off areas for motorcoaches.

7. **Sustainable:** Ensure that the Waterfront is able to sustain itself economically, environmentally, and operationally.
- ◆ Create revenue, initiate new partners, and leverage other resources that can be applied for enhancing and maintaining public open space and other public infrastructure.
 - ◆ Maximize the utilization of existing resources.
 - ◆ Generate sufficient net new tax revenue from new Waterfront economic activities to pay for Waterfront capital improvements and ongoing parks and facilities maintenance.
 - ◆ Identify opportunities for satellite public facilities to provide onsite Waterfront maintenance, security and emergency services.
 - ◆ Protect the existing amount of open space and, if possible, expand it.
 - ◆ Ensure that Waterfront development presents Alexandria as an Eco-City.
 - ◆ Integrate and activate natural systems and processes throughout the Waterfront.
 - ◆ Identify opportunities for environmental education features.
 - ◆ Use innovative and creative ideas for flood protection.
 - ◆ Improve public health (including mental health) through opportunities for active living.
 - ◆ Allow historic character and scale to influence new development opportunities.
8. **Compatible:** Ensure that future development in the Waterfront should respect the existing residential neighborhoods.
- ◆ Protect existing residential neighborhoods from excessive noise and traffic.
 - ◆ Offer activities and features that delight a diverse range of visitors.
 - ◆ Meet the needs of residents for open space, recreation and outdoor dining.
9. **Permeable:** Enhance vistas of the water from surrounding areas and of the Waterfront from the river.
- ◆ Create overlooks with views to the water and to the City.
 - ◆ Explore piers, especially where east-west streets meet the river.
 - ◆ Preserve and enhance view corridors to the water, including historic streets and alleys.
 - ◆ Create a system of visual elements to draw people to the water.
10. **Creative:** Be bold, visionary, realistic, informative and offer surprises along the way.
- ◆ Offer a variety of locations where the public can become engaged with each other, art, artists and history.
 - ◆ Offer participatory opportunities for people of all ages.
 - ◆ Use art and history to tell the unique story of people and experiences.
 - ◆ Provide flexible spaces that could be used for multiple activities.
 - ◆ Make the Waterfront an example of design excellence.

Community Participation: The Concept Plan

The Concept Plan was developed as an intermediate step in the planning process by taking the vision, ideas, activities and goals and shaping them into a narrative and preliminary design for the planning area. Following the release of the Concept Plan in May 2010, the City attended nearly 20 meetings with public stakeholder groups to solicit their comments on the information in the Concept Plan. The Concept Plan and meetings were an opportunity to check-in with stakeholders to determine if the document was a valid representation of their earlier input. That feedback helped in further shaping the Plan.

The group meetings occurred between May and October 2010:

- 5/3/2010 Community-wide Meeting on Concept Plan
- 5/12/2010 Old Town Civic Association Meeting
- 5/13/2010 Chamber of Commerce Government Relations Committee Meeting
- 5/18/2010 Waterfront Committee Meeting
- 5/20/2010 Park and Recreation Commission Meeting
- 5/25/2010 City Council Work Session
- 5/25/2010 Rivergate Homeowners Association Board Meeting
- 5/27/2010 Old Town North Community Partnership Event
- 6/2/2010 BAR – Old & Historic District Meeting
- 6/8/2010 Waterfront Committee – Waterfront Walk
- 6/15/2010 Waterfront Committee Meeting
- 6/15/2010 Historic Alexandria Resources Commission Meeting (with the Archaeological Commission and the Historic Restoration and Preservation Commission)
- 6/21/2010 Commission for the Arts Meeting
- 7/30/2010 Waterfront Alliance Meeting
- 9/15/2010 Archaeological Commission Meeting
- 9/21/2010 Commission for the Arts Meeting
- 9/21/2010 Historic Alexandria Resources Commission Meeting
- 10/13/2010 Commission on Persons with Disabilities Meeting

The above meetings, along with emails and letters, provided an opportunity for members of the community to share what they liked about the Concept Plan, most notably the prospect of expanding the King Street pier and offering residents and visitors more public access, more connectivity and more activities along the waterfront. Key questions which the public had relative the Concept Plan were incorporated into a Frequently Asked Questions document that is posted online. The positive feedback from the Concept Plan and the questions helped to shape the next stages of the process.

Community Participation: *Proposed Design for the Core Area*

Following the Concept Plan, the City developed a more detailed proposed design for the core area of the larger waterfront planning area. The core area generally extends from approximately First Street to Wolfe Street.

The more detailed proposed design for the core area was released in December 2010 at a Waterfront Open House and Community Meeting. The Open House consisted of an Exhibit Hour highlighting 4 related components of the waterfront planning process: the *Alexandria Waterfront Public Art Proposal 2010* produced by the arts community, the *Alexandria Waterfront History Plan 2010* produced by the history community, the *Potomac Waterfront Flood Mitigation Study* prepared in October 2009 by URS Corporation for the City, and an internally developed Waterfront Parking Strategy which in part utilized data from the *Old Town Area Parking Study* prepared in February 2010 by Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. for the City. The Exhibit Hour was followed by a presentation consisting of a powerpoint and a video tour of a scaled model highlighting features of the proposed design for the core area. Breakout sessions to solicit community feedback on the proposed design followed the presentation. Nearly 200 people attended this event. Like other events, the presentation and related materials are posted on the waterfront webpage.

Following the Waterfront Open House and Community Meeting, the City again attended 13 regular meetings of stakeholder groups to solicit their direct feedback on the proposed design. Examples of the stakeholder groups include:

- 1/11/2011 Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee Meeting
- 1/12/2011 Old Town Civic Association Meeting
- 1/12/2011 Waterford Place Homeowners Association Meeting
- 1/18/2011 Commission for the Arts Meeting
- 1/19/2011 Archaeological Commission Meeting
- 1/20/2011 Park and Recreation Commission Meeting
- 1/24/2011 Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association Meeting
- 1/24/2011 Environmental Policy Commission Meeting
- 2/1/2011 Planning Commission Work Session
- 2/2/2011 Old & Historic District Board of Architectural Review Meeting
- 2/7/2011 North Old Town Civic Association Meeting
- 2/8/2011 City Council Work Session
- 2/9/2011 Commission on Persons with Disabilities Meeting

Information from these meetings, along with the information generated through earlier community participation activities, technical data and analysis, design and regulatory expertise, meetings with property owners, meetings with commercial boat companies regarding the marina, and meetings with staff of various City departments was utilized to finalize the proposed design and other key recommendations for inclusion in the Plan.

Figure A2: Waterfront Small Area Illustrative Plan



Community Participation: *Small Area Plan*

Feedback, questions and comments from the community and other stakeholders are welcome on the Plan. That information will then be incorporated into an updated draft that is anticipated to proceed to the Planning Commission and City Council in preparation for another round of community input during the Planning Commission and City Council public hearing processes in spring.

